

Media Communication Webinar: Background on 2025–26 Test Data Release

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What we'll cover

- Why North Carolina releases these data
 - What the measures mean
 - How school grades are calculated
 - How schools are identified for added support
- When the public can see final results

What the annual report shows

- The Annual Testing Report summarizes student performance and academic growth for the 2025–26 school year.
 - It includes end-of-grade and end-of-course tests in reading, mathematics, and science across North Carolina public schools.
 - The tests align with the North Carolina Standard Course of Study.
- Results from 2023–24 and 2024–25 provide context.

Data Release Components

- End-of-grade and end-of-course test results
- Academic growth
- School Performance Grades (SPG) for schools and student groups
- Progress toward long-term goals
- Four- and five-year graduation rates
- Test participation rates
- Schools entering or leaving support and improvement status
- Other supporting data

Changes in data for 2025–26

ACT composite score change

- For school accountability, a composite score of 17 is the benchmark for the Grade 11 ACT measure and the combined ACT/WorkKeys indicator
- Reason for change: Beginning with students entering college in fall 2026, the University of North Carolina system uses an ACT composite score of 17 as part of admissions criteria.

Test Results

- End-of-grade and end-of-course tests in reading, mathematics, and science
 - Level 3 and Above: Grade-Level Proficiency
 - Are students performing at grade level?
 - Level 4 and Above: College and Career Readiness
 - Are students on track for college and career readiness
 - Percentage of students at every academic achievement level: Level 5, Level 4, Level 3 and Not Proficient

Additional Test Results

- The ACT
 - Percentage of 11th graders with a composite score of 17 or higher
 - Average composite score of 11th grade test takers
- WorkKeys:
 - Percentage of 12th grade Career and Technical Education concentrators earning a Silver certificate or higher
- English Learner Progress
 - Percentage of English learners making progress toward or meeting the state language proficiency standard

Academic Growth Statuses

- Academic growth estimates how much progress students made during the year
- A student can make strong growth even without reaching grade-level proficiency
- Schools are rated Exceeded, Met, or Did Not Meet Growth Expectations
 - North Carolina uses EVAAS to calculate growth when common assessments are available

School Performance Grades

- School Performance Grades combine achievement measures and growth
 - A school's overall score is 80% achievement and 20% growth
 - Letter grades are assigned based on the scale
 - A: 85–100, B: 70–84, C: 55–69, D: 40–54, F: Less than 40
- Schools receive an overall grade and grades for student groups when at least 30 students are included in one or more indicators
 - K–2 schools receive letter grades of the school to which they send the largest percentage of students
 - Schools approved to use the state's alternative accountability system are assigned letter grades only when required for federal support identifications under the Every Student Succeeds Act State Plan

How School Performance Grades are calculated

Component	Score	Multiply by	Input for final grade
School Achievement	64.4	.80	52.0
Growth	100.0	.20	20.0

Final Score = 72

Grade = B

Schools serving grades 3–8 also receive separate reading and mathematics scores and grades. Each uses the same 80% achievement and 20% growth formula.

Measures by school level

Elementary/Middle School	High School
Reading EOG scores	English II scores
Math EOG scores	High school math EOC scores (NC Math 1 and NC Math 3)
NC Math 1 EOC scores	Cohort Graduation Rate (4-year rate)
Science EOG scores	Biology EOC scores
English learners progress	English learners progress
<i>Growth (reading, math, and science)</i>	ACT / ACT WorkKeys
	Math course rigor
	<i>Growth (reading and math)</i>
Participation	Participation

Long-term Goals

- Under the federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), North Carolina sets long-term goals and yearly milestones for:
 - Reading and mathematics in grades 3–8
 - Reading in grade 10
 - Mathematics in grade 11
 - The four-year graduation rate
 - English learner progress

Schools are expected to test at least 95% of students

- The 95% participation requirement helps make results representative of the students a school serves.
- Participation rates are reported for a student group when at least 30 students are included.
- If a school falls below 95% participation in reading or mathematics, the shortfall affects its academic achievement indicator.

Federal Identification of Schools

- Federal law requires states to identify schools that need added support.
 - Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI) generally applies to the lowest-performing schools or high schools with very low graduation rates.
 - Targeted Support and Improvement (TSI) focuses on consistently underperforming student groups.

CSI Schools	TSI Schools
CSI – Low Performing: Lowest performing five percent of all Title I schools CSI – Low Graduation Rate: High Schools with graduation rates lower than 66.7 percent CSI – Additional Targeted Support: Unable to exit TSI-Additional Targeted Support status after six years and receive Title 1 funds.	Subgroups within a school that are consistently underperforming or in need of additional targeted support

Federal category changes this year

Designation	Identification (2026–27)	Exit (2025–26)
CSI-Low Performing	No	No
CSI-Low Graduation Rate	No	No
CSI- Additional Targeted Support Not Exiting Such Status	No	No
TSI-Consistently Underperforming	Yes	Yes
TSI-Additional Targeted Support	No	Yes

State Identification of Schools

- Low-Performing School
 - A school with a D or F performance grade and a growth status of Met or Not Met.
- Low-Performing District
 - A district where more than half of schools are identified as low performing
- Continually Low-Performing School or Charter School
 - A school identified as low performing in at least two of the last three years.

State Identifications

Designation	Identification
Low-Performing School	Yes
Low-Performing District	Yes
Continually Low-Performing School	Yes
Continually Low-Performing Charter School	Yes

Cohort Graduation Rate

- A cohort is the group of students who first entered ninth grade in the same year.
 - **Four-year rate: students who entered in 2022–23.**
 - **Five-year rate: students who entered in 2021–22.**
- Transfers into a school stay with their original cohort. Documented transfers to another diploma-granting school may be removed.

Public Data Release Timeline

September 2

- Results are presented to the State Board of Education and posted to the NCDPI website

September 2–11

- Schools and districts may submit eligible data corrections

October 1

- Corrections are presented to the State Board of Education for final approval and results are updated on the NCDPI website

QUESTIONS

